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Viewing cable 04ANKARA4, AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES U.S. VISIT, CYPRUS, NATO

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
04ANKARA4	2004-01-02 11:25	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Ankara

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 000004

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/01/2009
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [EINV](#) [AM](#) [CY](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES U.S. VISIT, CYPRUS, NATO
SUMMIT WITH PM

Classified by Ambassador Eric S. Edelman; reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: The Ambassador met with Turkish PM Erdogan December 31 in advance of Erdogan's late-January U.S. visit. The Ambassador said White House officials view the visit as an opportunity to enhance U.S.-Turkey relations and set the stage for the June NATO Summit in Istanbul. The USG and GOT continue to work to address GOT concerns over the conditions of a USD 8.5 billion loan to Turkey. He urged the GOT to resolve outstanding investment disputes with U.S. companies and improve relations with Armenia. Erdogan offered to send a high-level MFA team to Washington in advance of his visit to discuss the Summit. He said he is committed to resolving investment disputes and improving relations with Armenia through reciprocal steps. The GOT remains committed to Cyprus negotiations based on the Annan plan and may hold a Cyprus summit once a government is formed in the "TRNC." End Summary.

U.S. Visit Sets Stage for NATO Summit

12. (C) The Ambassador told Erdogan that President Bush and other top USG officials are looking forward to his visit to Washington in late January. A column in the Turkish press claiming that the PM would only have a 20-minute meeting with President Bush was incorrect. The Ambassador outlined the

PM's White House program, which he said was similar to the format used for other world leaders, including UK PM Blair, Spanish President Aznar, and French President Chirac. White House officials would welcome a visit by senior MFA representatives in advance of Erdogan's visit to discuss the June NATO Summit in Istanbul. The White House is interested in using the Summit as a means to promote the values of the NATO alliance in the greater Middle East. Turkey has much to contribute to this goal, and the USG is eager to discuss the vision and substance of the Summit with the GOT. Erdogan thanked the Ambassador for his efforts in support of the Washington visit. He said he believes the visit will have an important impact on the Middle East, Cyprus, and the NATO Summit. In addition to the Washington meetings, Erdogan will also speak to groups in New York and Boston. Turkish businessmen traveling with Erdogan will meet with U.S. counterparts. These meetings should help strengthen and expand Turkey-U.S. relations. The GOT could send a high-level MFA delegation to Washington 10-15 days before the PM visit to discuss the Summit. Erdogan said the Turkish press is unreliable and frequently strives to make the GOT look bad. He asked the Ambassador to tell the press that the column concerning Erdogan's visit was inaccurate; the Ambassador agreed.

Cyprus

13. (C) The Ambassador formally delivered to Erdogan a letter from President Bush concerning the PM's U.S. visit and Cyprus. The Embassy delivered the letter informally in advance of Erdogan's December 30 briefing on the MFA Cyprus plan. Erdogan said the letter was constructive and had been a useful element in his exchange with the MFA. He noted that since coming to power in the November 2002 elections, the GOT has consistently supported negotiations based on the Annan plan, and he said that continues to be the goal. Elements of the Turkish State agreed that negotiations on the basis of the Annan Plan need to resume as soon as possible, but internal discussions on details of the approach are continuing. After a "TRNC" government is established the GOT wants negotiations to resume quickly. It might be necessary to hold another summit with the "TRNC" leadership in Turkey to move the initiative forward.

Working to Resolve Loan Conditions

14. (C) The Ambassador noted that the USG continues to work with the MFA to address the GOT's concerns over the language tying the USD 8.5 billion loan to Turkey to a GOT agreement not to enter northern Iraq unilaterally. The goal is to meet the political requirements of the GOT while staying within the limits of U.S. congressional legislation. The Embassy has confirmed with the U.S. Treasury Department that the money will continue to be available while both sides work to resolve the issue. Erdogan said the political opposition, particularly in Parliament, has been "very ugly" on this issue, even accusing the GOT of "selling" Turkey. Neither the U.S. nor the GOT can afford to allow the GOT's opponents to use this issue as a political tool to damage the U.S.-Turkey strategic partnership.

Outstanding Investment Disputes

15. (C) Erdogan said the GOT is committed to maintaining fiscal discipline. The government plans to stick to its 2004 inflation target of 12 percent. Growth for next year should meet the 5 percent target, but the goal for the following year should be 7 or 7.5 percent. The Ambassador said that Erdogan's visit should highlight Turkey's solid economic performance, but should also focus on progress on some outstanding investment and business disputes. If a few of these disputes could be resolved before the visit, it would enable both sides to portray Turkey as a good place for U.S. companies to invest. For example, the GOT has made significant progress on the Cargill zoning dispute, though Parliament must pass legislation in order to fully resolve it. Erdogan said he places a high priority on resolving these types of disputes, and had given instructions to resolve the Cargill issue. The GOT needs to take the necessary measures to attract foreign direct investment. He asked whether the Embassy could provide a list of all such disputes involving U.S. companies. The Ambassador said the Embassy had given the list to a number of GOT officials, and would also send a copy directly to the PM's office.

Turkish-Armenian Relations

16. (SBU) The Ambassador said Turkish-Armenian relations might also be raised during Erdogan's visit. Anything Turkey could do to enhance relations, particularly in the economic field, would be helpful for both Armenia and northeastern Turkey. It would also help the U.S. administration politically. Erdogan said the GOT has a positive approach toward relations with Armenia, and has even encouraged the Azeris to take a positive approach. The GOT is willing to negotiate, but the Armenians must agree to take reciprocal steps.

Rotations Through Incirlik

17. (C) The Ambassador thanked Erdogan for the GOT's decision to approve the use of Incirlik to rotate troops in and out of Iraq. The USG will handle the rotations in a low-key manner, with no public comments, but is very grateful for the support.

EDELMAN